

PROARCA/CAPAS

Results

for 1999-2000

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RESULT 1: Protection and management of key public and private protected areas in Central America

Result 1.1

Working with partner organizations, make important progress towards the establishment of at least one new protected area in each of at least two ecosystems and/or ecoregions where protected areas coverage is currently deficient (i.e., filling “gaps” identified in CAPAS I).

Goal for year 4: Implementation in one ecosystem/ecoregion

Accomplishments:

To contribute towards conservation strategies for Central America’s northern range of the volcanic ecosystem of the Sierra Madre, PROARCA/CAPAS fielded a multi-disciplinary team to assess the important natural and human communities, and their interactions, to lay the groundwork for ecosystem protection.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	We made significant efforts to coordinate with CONAP; The Nature Conservancy; the municipal governments of Zunil, Quetzaltenango, and San Martin Sacatepéquez; Helvetas (Swiss aid); the Jacques Cousteau Institute; and three NGOs (FUNDAP, WUKUB’, NOJ).
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	Ricardo Soto, among the region’s leading conservation biologists, led the effort. In his team were Lemuel Valle (key mastozoologist), Mario Véliz (among Guatemala’s best botanists), Daniel Tenez (ornithologist), Manuel Acevedo (key herpetologist), Guillermo Santos (hydrologist), and Silvel Elías (sociologist). This team generated an impressive evaluation within a short time and for a modest budget.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	PROARCA/CAPAS obtained important back-stopping from TNC/Guatemala. TNC worked with CAPAS to interact with CONAP; to help set up workshops; and to provide clerical and administrative support for the technical team in the field.

Result 1.2

Monitoring in protected areas: (i) expand the monitoring framework from CAPAS I to at least four new protected areas; (ii) develop and apply an advanced framework for monitoring in at least three protected areas; and (iii) develop and test a framework for monitoring of protected areas at the level of a national system.

Goal for year 4: (i) 2 protected areas; (ii) 3 protected areas; and (iii) one national system.

Accomplishments:**Basic Level:**

In year 4, PROARCA/CAPAS added El Imposible National Park (El Salvador) and Mombacho National Park (Nicaragua). Additionally, CONAP requested PROARCA/CAPAS to initiate monitoring for 12 protected areas in Guatemala: RUM Atitlán, RB Visis Cabá, PRM Quetzaltenango; PRM San Martín Sacatepéquez, PN Monterico, PN Volcán Pacaya, PN Lachua, BP Quetzal, RN Cerro San Gil, BP Punta Manabique, MC Complejo II, and PN Laguna del Tigre.

Advanced Level:

Monitoring exercises at the “advanced level” were completed for three protected areas in three countries: Nicaragua – PN Masaya; Costa Rica – PN Guanacaste; and Guatemala – PN Sierra de las Minas.

National System:

We provided the databases, instruction, and training for governments to monitor protected areas at the national level in two countries: Costa Rica and Panama. Three other countries expressed their interest in doing the same in the near future: Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	PROARCA/CAPAS has been careful to work with protected areas and systems that have the potential to utilize the benefits of this management information tool. We have implanted working examples of the monitoring framework in all seven countries, and the demand for technical support and training has been growing. In this past year we responded to DAPVS (Honduras), CONAP (Guatemala), PANAVIS (El Salvador), ANAM (Panama), and SINAC (Costa Rica).

<p>c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project</p>	<p>José Courrau, Yadira Mena, and Gerardo Artavia are recognized leaders in the monitoring initiative across the region. Lenin Corrales developed the database to aggregate the monitoring of individual protected areas at a national level. The region's growing requests for the services and reports of these four individuals are evidence of their expertise.</p>
<p>d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative</p>	<p>For Panama, Honduras, and Guatemala, we were alert to the appointment of new directors of their agencies for protected areas. With these new leaders, we have been very successful in making the case for the monitoring framework. That is, we took advantage of the political opportunities afforded us.</p>

Result 1.3

Propose and implement improved strategies to finance conservation for a minimum of eight protected areas, based on lessons learned in CAPAS I.

Goal for year 4: Financial plans prepared for five protected areas.

Accomplishments:

We successfully coordinated 5-year financial plans for five protected areas in five countries, as follows: Cockscomb Wildlife Reserve (Belize), Laguna del Tigre National Park (Guatemala), Mombacho National Park (Nicaragua), Gandoca/Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge (Costa Rica), and Bastimentos Island Marine Park (Panama).

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	PROARCA/CAPAS does not write financial plans for others, but instead facilitates others to prepare their own financial planning with backstopping from us. Financial management continues to be an Aquiles heel for Central American managers of protected areas. This places a demand on us for flexibility and extended follow-up.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	Through his exclusive dedication to financial planning for PROARCA/CAPAS during these past two years, Juan José Dada has earned a place among Central America's most qualified professionals in this technical area.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	We made a special point to "regionalize" the financial planning in our choices of protected areas, and to coordinate with PROARCA/Costas in the selection of the Bastimentos marine site.

Result 1.4

Develop or improve the capacity of at least eight protected areas to manage ecotourism (for example, with respect to lodging and food, parking, local guides, trail maintenance, shops selling natural products, equipment rental, etc.).

Goal for year 4: Capacity improved in five protected areas.

Accomplishments:

We advanced the capacity of six protected areas to manage ecotourism:

1. Re-design of the ecotourism package at Cerro San Gíl, Guatemala
2. Criteria for concessionaires to engage in ecotourism services at Los Albores, Sierra de las Minas National Park, Guatemala
3. Strengthening of small business in the San Miguelito community, adjacent to El Imposible National Park, El Salvador
4. Guidelines to manage visitation at Mombacho National Park, Nicaragua;
5. Classroom, trail, and support services for environmental education at Volcán Irazú National Park, Costa Rica
6. Assessment of the feasibility for Horizontes Forest Experiment Station to accommodate ecotourists, Guanacaste Conservation Area, Costa Rica

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	PROARCA/CAPAS established a competitive process to select the best project ideas, and then assembled all selected participants for a six-week intensive course in the "how to" of ecotourism projects. We provided follow-up by sending Ana Báez, our lead consultant for this activity, to inspect each field site and offer final recommendations.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	Ana Báez is among the region's leading authorities in ecotourism, and despite her intensive schedule, was able to conclude her assignment within the yearly framework.

<p>d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative</p>	<p>We interacted with the respective governmental and NGO organizations in order to insure that these ecotourism initiatives fit within their priorities. To start, PROARCA/CAPAS invited participants from each of the seven countries in order to set a regional tone for the activity (but participants from only four countries completed their project assignments). We surpassed our benchmark for this activity by a margin of one protected area.</p>
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Result 1.5

Provide training to key governmental and non-governmental personnel in at least twenty protected areas within the influence of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, distributed among at least four countries, in themes such as workplans, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, and institutional development.

Goal for year 4: Training for key personnel in at least 12 protected areas.

Accomplishments:

The component of PROARCA/CAPAS for protected areas (i.e., led from San José) offered 15 training sessions during Year 4, directed to an audience of 100+ leaders and staff from 30 protected areas (seven countries) of Central America.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	We retain sufficient flexibility in our training plan to be able to respond to demand-driven requests. For example, ANAM (Panama) asked us for regional lessons learned in co-management of protected areas, and we helped lead that contribution in collaboration with USAID/Panama. DAPVS (Honduras) requested that PROARCA/CAPAS refresh their staff in several technical themes, and we responded positively. The same applies for MARENA (Nicaragua) and CONAP (Guatemala).
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	Our approach is to integrate training across the other results, meaning that we seldom hire special technical assistance for it. Exceptions were Oscar Núñez for co-management of protected areas, and Lenín Corrales for training in database management.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	We not only surpassed our benchmark, but we did it with a customer-service orientation. Moreover, to every extent possible we coordinated with key actors (e.g., USAID/Panama and SICA/Environment for co-management of protected areas; IUCN for databases of protected areas; TNC/Guatemala and other actors for the Sierra Madre ecosystem).

Small Grants in Support of Result 1

(see final box of this matrix, Small Grants)

1. Maya Forest Action Plan: protection strategies for biodiversity in the area of Maya Chuj, Huehuetenango, (Guatemala)
2. INADES: socio-economic support for protection strategies by rural communities in the El Chile watershed (Honduras)
3. ANCON/CYPRES: biological and social analysis for a possible protected area in Santa Fe de Veraguas (Panama)
4. Talamanca-Caribbean Biological Corridor: mobilization of local communities to support protection of the Talamanca-Caribe Corridor (Costa Rica)
5. FAICO: the impact of current fishing practices on the marine resources of Isla del Coco Conservation Area (Costa Rica)
6. Tazumal Foundation: participatory planning and zoning of the Joya de Cerén Natural Area (El Salvador)
7. Cocibolca Foundation: participatory analysis of land tenure and use around Mombacho National Park (Nicaragua)
8. PROLANSATE: diagnostic of land tenure in the Punta Izopo National Park (Honduras)

Genius Grants in Support of Result 1

(see Result 5.2)

1. Julianne Robinson: Conservation and protection of Lighthouse Reef Atoll (Belize)
2. Jorge Cabrera: Participation of communities and local authorities in the management of the Visis Caba Biosphere Reserve (Guatemala)
3. Estuardo Secaira: Nature conservation, the Maya Movement, and spirituality: implications for conservation (Guatemala)
4. Raquel María López: Production and conservation in equilibrium with the Miraflor protected area, Esteli municipality (Nicaragua)
5. José Enrique Barraza: Monitoring heavy metals in the sediments and biota of the Lempa River (El Salvador)
6. Jairo Mora: A geographical atlas as a tool for the planning and conservation of natural resources in the La Amistad Conservation Area (Costa Rica)

RESULT 2: Improved coordination of policies and strategies among countries in order to protect and manage the flora and fauna of Central America.

Result 2.1

Assist and demonstrate advances in the structure and/or implementation of CITES, and in at least one other cross-country agreement for the protection of flora and fauna in Central America.

Goal for year 4: (i) Advances to strengthen CITES; (ii) Mahogany diagnostic for Central America; and (iii) Assistance to the subregional agreement [Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama] for the management of marine turtles.

Accomplishments:

CITES

We worked with an expert in environmental law (Roxana Salazar, Fundación Ambio) to define a uniform framework for the administration of CITES in this region. With the assistance of the Executive Secretariat of SICA/Environment, we refined and then validated this framework in the seven countries (plus Mexico) through an extensive consultation process (8 country workshops + 2 regional sessions).

Mahogany Diagnostic

This was completed for all of Central America (plus Mexico), resulting in 17 diagnostic reports and 4 regional maps that summarize the range of mahogany (original and current); current pressures on the resource; and measures that each country is taking (or not taking) for its management and conservation.

Marine Turtles

We worked with the Regional Network for the Conservation of Marine Turtles (the current secretariat is ANAI, Costa Rica) to draft, validate, and diffuse 500 printed copies and a CD of "best practices" for the management of marine turtles.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	Our work with CITES demanded careful coordination with SICA/Environment. To implement the mahogany work, we led a coordinated but inherently complicated effort that involved a main subcontractor, WWF, CITES authorities, and six national consultants. Regarding the manual for marine turtles, we interacted with PROARCA/Costas and the national governments of Panama, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua to approach turtle conservation in a non-political framework.

c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	We contend that Fundación Ambio (for CITES), the Tropical Science Center (for mahogany), and the Regional Turtle Conservation Network (for marine turtles) were solid choices to lead the technical efforts in each case.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	Cross-country activities demand significant investments in communications, and we were willing and able to make those investments. Moreover, we leveraged financial and professional resources from important partners (i.e., SICA/Environment for CITES; WWF for mahogany; PROARCA/Costas and the Regional Turtle Conservation Network for turtles).

Result 2.2

Working with partner organizations, propose and carry out strategies to help finance Joint Implementation in Central America.

Goal for year 4: Information diffusion.

Accomplishments:

In 1998-1999, PROARCA/CAPAS produced a total of 16 analyses in the following themes: the amount of carbon fixed and stored by the forests of Central America; carbon-fixing in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor; Central America's competitiveness in world carbon-fixing markets; and results of regional workshops to improve the design and marketing of carbon-fixing projects.

In 1999-2000, we implemented the diffusion step. The project's Communications Unit made all reports available in the following forms: on-line at our project website; printed copies, upon request; electronic files by email and by diskettes, upon request; and a CD of all reports and the GIS, upon request.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	Our decision to produce the CD raises the information to the level of a "package." We are providing access to useful and in some cases unique GIS data that were difficult, sensitive, and time-consuming to obtain.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	N/A
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	We announced the availability of this information via email, regular mail, and in print (i.e., in our Monthly Bulletin). Also, we made a special effort to determine the organizations in Central America that have the technical capacity to use the GIS data.

Result 2.3

Demonstrate significant advances in at least one case of planning and coordination across countries with respect to forest management, wildlife management, and/or other natural resources.

Goal for year 4: Make significant advances in the cases of: (i) El Pilar, and (ii) Gulf of Honduras.

Accomplishments:**El Pilar**

In Year 4, we contributed to the development and acceptance of three enabling instruments for the management of the reserve: (1) a master plan for the area acceptable to CONAP/Guatemala; (2) a medium-term strategy for management of the reserve; and (3) formation of a binational steering council. We also sponsored the third El Pilar Roundtable to continue the productive dialogue that has been occurring between Belize and Guatemala at the level of El Pilar.

Gulf of Honduras

Our achievement was the design, quantitative estimation, and preliminary validation of a bioeconomic model for shrimp and lobster in the Gulf.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	The project's support for El Pilar takes into account complex relationships among governmental, NGO, and university actors. Regarding the analysis of fisheries economics in the Gulf of Honduras, we coordinated the design and validation with PROARCA/Costas and the program for the Mesoamerican Reef (WWF as well as PNUD/GEF).
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	For binational accords and memoranda at El Pilar, we called upon CONSULTARE (José Antonio Montes), unsurpassed for understanding the Belizean and Guatemalan legal codes for environment and natural resources. Even in this period of tense political relationships between the countries, CONSULTARE was able to produce workable agreements. For the fisheries model of Gulf of Honduras, we called upon ICSED (Santiago, Chile) to lead the effort because of their exceptional qualifications and experience. Conceptually and in terms of the economic data it uses, the resulting model is unique for Gulf of Honduras and perhaps for any fishery in Central America.

<p>d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative</p>	<p>CAPAS organized a meeting with SICA/Environment in San Salvador to present El Pilar as a leading example of binational cooperation for protected areas. For the bioeconomic model in the Gulf of Honduras, we asked ICSED to estimate relationships on the basis of data from fishermen rather than published (notoriously deficient) data from governments. Thus an important by-product of the model itself are relatively good data on harvests, costs, market channels, etc., for shrimp and lobster.</p>
<p>Small Grants in Support of Result 2 <i>(see final box of this matrix, Small Grants)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FUNZEL: Multi-institutional administration of CITES (El Salvador) 2. IDEADS: Regulations to administer CITES in Guatemala, and visual materials to educate customs officials about key species that cannot be traded (Guatemala) 3. Fundación Solar: Quantity and economic value of carbon fixation in the southern watershed of Lake Atitlan (Guatemala) 4. Help for Progress: Community support in Belize and Guatemala for protection of the binational El Pilar reserve (Belize) 5. TIDE: Production and dissemination of "Voice of the Fishermen," a grass-roots perspective of how fishermen in the Gulf of Honduras see problems and solutions (Belize) <p>Genius Grants in Support of Result 2 <i>(see Result 5.2)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Karla Cantarero: Strengthening the administration of CITES (Honduras) 2. Héctor Guzmán: Connectivity among coral reefs in three countries of Central America, and implications for a regional marine biological corridor (Panama) 	

RESULT 3: Advance conservation policies and practices for private and indigenous lands in and near Central American protected areas.

Result 3.1

(was completed in 1999]

Result 3.2

Work with partner organizations to reform environmental policies and practices in agriculture, forest management, and tourism in the seven countries.

Goal for year 4: (i) Agriculture: policies and practices to assist environmentally-friendly coffee; (ii) Forest management: policies and practices to improve citizen participation in decision making; and (iii) Tourism: policies and practices to increase community benefits from ecotourism.

Accomplishments:

Coffee

The regional policy analysis in the previous annual cycle called attention to the fragmentation of information among buyers and sellers of certified coffees. The reform led by PROARCA/CAPAS is a website-based Market Information System (MIS) that features profiles of Central American organizations, certified suppliers, and other actors in the markets for certified coffees. The aim is to improve market efficiency by lessening transactions costs.

Forest Management

The regional analysis last year noted that only one country, Costa Rica, had instituted a truly participatory process to debate forest policies. The reform by PROARCA/CAPAS was to encourage at least one other country to do likewise, and that country is Panama. We succeeded in working with ANAM, the Panamanian chamber of forest industries, and Panama's leading environmental and social NGOs to convene a national forum on forest policies for Panama. The aim was to prepare the different stakeholders for the possibility of a new forest law in Panama.

Ecotourism

Last year's analysis found that a principal obstacle limiting the flow of ecotourism's benefits to communities is discoordination among actors and no real policy commitment to foster a social aspect in tourism. The intervention by PROARCA/CAPAS was to encourage at least one country to organize itself to address this concern, and that country is Guatemala. With extensive organizational assistance by PROARCA/CAPAS, Guatemala formed the Permanent Forum for Ecotourism and Conservation (FOPECO). This Forum comprises the lead public agency (INGUAT), the country's tourism chamber (CAMTUR), tour operators, conservation NGOs, university faculty and students, and community representatives. FOPECO's aim is to define and participate in strategies that will increasingly benefit local people in Guatemala's ecotourism.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	<p>PROARCA/CAPAS coordinated with SICA/Environment so that the design of the MIS for certified coffees (to begin in Sept. 2000) will fit into SICA's strategy for environmental markets, as defined largely by the Competitiveness Agenda for Central America (INCAE). Regarding the forum on forest policies in Panama, we invested several months of communications with various forestry and conservation leaders in Panama. Finally, the formation of FOPECO for ecotourism in Guatemala was due in large measure to the relationship that we established with the tourism chamber (CAMTUR), and CAMTUR's willingness and ability to lead a participatory process that involved sensitive interest groups.</p>
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	<p>Regarding coffee, we worked through CRECER (a regional network that exports to international markets) and several actors in the private sector (coffee buyers, toasters, producers, and certifiers). This makes the MIS a client-driven service, and enhances its relevance. Regarding forest policy in Panama, we invited Jorge Rodriguez of Costa Rica as a keynote speaker to share that country's experience in participatory forest policies with the Panamanians as a point of departure.</p>
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	<p>Regarding the MIS for coffee, PROARCA/CAPAS is contributing to discussions within and outside of USAID to extend the system geographically and in terms of the products it represents. For forest policy, we consulted extensively with USAID/Panama to have the forum on participatory forest policies complement that mission's agenda and calendar. Regarding FOPECO for Guatemala, SICA/Environment has requested PROARCA/CAPAS to help extend this model to other countries in association with the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.</p>

Result 3.3

Working with at least ten landowners in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor distributed in at least two countries, propose and implement private conservation reserves, conservation easements, usufruct agreements, and/or similar conservation instruments.

Goal for year 4: Implementation with six landowners.

Accomplishments:

In Year 4, funding through PROARCA/CAPAS established twenty-four conservation easements in Costa Rica; one conservation easement in Guatemala; five private conservation reserves in Nicaragua; and twelve private conservation reserves in Panama. These instruments provide protection for a land area of 9,255 ha. Additionally, we assessed project opportunities for private lands conservation in the other countries (i.e., Belize, El Salvador, and Honduras), essentially covering the region with this initiative.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	Through the project's interventions, we have successfully drawn upon Costa Rica's leadership in private lands conservation for transfer to other countries. Easements are the stronger instrument for conservation, but are too restrictive for most landowners. Thus we deliberately invested in two different approaches: conservation easements on one hand, and private reserves on the other. This dual approach proved to be a good strategy.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	We chose the leading entities in the region for private lands conservation: CEDARENA for conservation easements, and the Costa Rican Network of Natural Reserves for private reserves.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	To the best of our knowledge, PROARCA/CAPAS is the only regional environmental project to be active with networks of private landowners interested in conservation, and to connect these efforts at a conceptual level with the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. The conservation easement at Laguna Yaxhá in Guatemala is the first easement in the country to conform to an international legal concept of how an easement should be written. Moreover, to the best of our knowledge, the private reserves in both Nicaragua and Panama are "first" for those countries. We surpassed our benchmark for this result by a very wide margin.

Small Grants in Support of Result 3

(see final box of this matrix, Small Grants)

1. CEDAPRODE: A mechanism to recognize the rights and obligations of private reserves in Nicaragua's legal framework (Nicaragua)
2. Costa Rican Network of Private Natural Reserves: Assisting Panama and Guatemala to develop national networks of private reserves, and promoting the concept of a Central American network of private reserves in consultation with key actors across the region (Costa Rica)

Genius Grants in Support of Result 3

(see Result 5.2)

1. Grethel Aguilar Rojas: Legal instruments for the sustainable use of biodiversity in indigenous territories (Costa Rica)
2. Rogerio de Miranda: Mobilizing an association for forest restoration, with an emphasis on industrial fuelwood production (Nicaragua)

RESULT 4: Improved market access for Central American products and services that meet high environmental standards in agriculture, forestry, and ecotourism.

Result 4.1

Working with regional entities, strengthen and expand the organic/green component of agriculture that is compatible with biodiversity conservation (*PROARCA/CAPAS has chosen to focus on the coffee sector*).

Goal for year 4: Implementation of three key interventions.

Accomplishments:

At the regional level, we coordinated with several partners to send small-scale producers of alternative coffees from eight Central American organizations to the Specialty Coffee Fair in the USA. The aim was to help these Central American producers establish direct contact with buyers in order to better assess sales prospects, requirements, and business contacts.

At the regional level, we helped ECO-OK produce and distribute materials through its national partners that provide information about the ECO-OK certification program at the level of farmers and others in the rural population. Additionally, we continued to disseminate materials that we produced in 1998-1999 about the other options for coffee certification in Central America.

At the regional level, PROARCA/CAPAS co-financed with other partners a seminar for representatives from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Honduras on the theme of international trends in the coffee markets, and the challenges this raises for producers of alternative coffees. The objective was to help producers in the region discuss how to cope with low coffee prices in 1999-2000.

In Honduras, PROARCA/CAPAS and SNV (Dutch international aid) helped the main association of coffee cooperatives develop a marketing strategy for their coffee harvests of 1999-2000. These cooperatives doubled their sales of specialty coffee (i.e., implying premium prices) for the harvest of 1999 compared with 1998. We also worked with AHPROCAFE (the national association of coffee producers) to help raise the quality of their marketed product, and thus reduce the price discount for Honduran coffee (i.e., the price for Honduran coffee has been \$10-15/quintal below prices received by other countries).

In Guatemala, we advanced the capacity of Mayacert to engage in co-certification, to expand its client base, and to better understand how to do business in Central America.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached

99

<p>b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark</p>	<p>We successfully collaborated with other principal parties including Dutch aid, TransFair (USA), FIIT (Guatemala), USAID/Honduras, SERNA (Honduras), and especially the regional association CRECER. Most interventions we report for Year 4 would not have been possible without this co-sponsorship. Moreover, the collaboration among PROARCA/CAPAS, Dutch aid, and CRECER stimulated initiatives that are larger and more ambitious than were previously possible, e.g., the regional seminar on coffee markets for five countries.</p>
<p>c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project</p>	<p>Rather than pursuing a single emphasis, we selectively targeted our technical assistance to meet the needs of each client group. This refers to expertise in the different themes of coffee milling, certification, market strategies, and institutional strengthening.</p>
<p>d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative</p>	<p>We made five interventions (the benchmark was three), and we helped an unspecified number of small-scale coffee producers obtain a price of \$126/quintal compared with an average price of about \$95/quintal in the open (unspecialized) market.</p>

Result 4.2

Working with regional entities, strengthen and expand initiatives for forest certification.

Goal for year 4: Implementation of two key interventions.

Accomplishments:

Through the assistance of PROARCA/CAPAS, 20 forest management units (across the seven countries) participated in a pre-certification analysis. Through this intervention, each of the 20 forest owners (some public, some private, some cooperative) now has the information and experience to decide whether to go ahead with forest certification.

We convened an intensive one-week course in forest certification for 36 forestry leaders from Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama (to complement a similar intensive course in 1998-1999 for Costa Rica and Belize).

For El Salvador, our intervention was different because of that country's unique forestry situation (i.e., so little forest cover). We convened nearly 60 Salvadorean decisionmakers, including congressmen as well as the ministers for both environment and agriculture, to exchange views in San Salvador with Costa Rican forestry leaders on sustainable forest management, including a briefing on forest certification.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	Working with our subcontractor, we carefully screened the participants for these activities. The logistics for each activity demanded considerable communication and coordination across the region.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	The interventions were led by our subcontractor Recursos Naturales Tropicales (RNT), which we assert to be the best-qualified group in Central America to address forest certification.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	The 20 forest management units for the pre-certification were strategically distributed across the seven countries. The intensive course in forest certification was held in San Carlos, Costa Rica, and permitted the participants to intersperse field visits to certified forests and plantations with classroom learning. In El Salvador, we were honored to address a "summit level" of top decisionmakers.

Result 4.3

Working with regional entities, provide opportunities for ecotourism enterprises and associations to evaluate their common and different interests in standards for certification and licensing.

Goal for year 4: Implementation of two key interventions.

Accomplishments:

At the regional level, PROARCA/CAPAS worked through the auspices of the Central American Federation of Tourism Chambers (FEDECATUR) to build the capacity of the organization Service Best in tourism certification. We trained 23 Service Best inspectors; organized and funded a regional seminar on tourism marketing and administration; developed and initiated new marketing strategies for Service Best; and provided the tourism chambers with supporting instructional and promotional materials. These activities enabled Service Best to strengthen itself in Panama, Costa Rica, and Guatemala – and to get started in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

PROARCA/CAPAS helped the Rare Conservation Center to catalyze the Mesoamerican Alliance for Ecotourism Development for actors in Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. Additionally, PROARCA/CAPAS assisted small-scale ecotourism owners and operators in Costa Rica and Guatemala to promote a joint (two-country) ecotourism package. The first alliance focuses on ecotourism mainly in protected areas, and has produced business plans for 16 options (the Alliance's business office opens in Sept. 2000). The second alliance is selling its ecotourism package in Europe through FUTUROPA, with backing from GTZ.

PROARCA/CAPAS helped the Guatemalan tourism authorities (INGUAT) define a framework for tourism standards, after which INGUAT formally moved to adopt the Certificate of Sustainable Tourism (CST) and agreed on an action plan for its implementation. Guatemala is the second country in the region, after Costa Rica, to declare itself in support of a national system for tourism certification.

In Year 4, we provided substantial technical assistance to COOPRENA -- Costa Rica's National Ecotourism Consortium and Network -- to help COOPRENA's members with product differentiation, pricing policies, marketing channels, and training in these aspects. Occupancy rates in COOPRENA's establishments rose from 15% in 1998-1999 to 50% in 1999-2000, possibly in response to some of these actions.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached

99

b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	PROARCA/CAPAS is among the few environmental projects in Central America with expertise in tourism certification and labeling. Moreover, we opened the door to key players to join us in partnerships, e.g., the Rare Conservation Center; Dutch, German, and Canadian international cooperation; FEDECATUR; INFOCOOP (Costa Rica); and others.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	Most assistance originated within PROARCA/CAPAS itself. Our coordinator focused on strategies that will help client enterprises and associations become managerially and economically self-sufficient as soon as possible.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	PROARCA/CAPAS is the only regional project in Central America to assist small and medium ecotourism operations with quality standards and marketing. Our work to expand tourism standards complements the Competitiveness Agenda for Central America, and is consistent with ideas and plans in SICA/Environment.

Small Grants in Support of Result 4

(see final box of this matrix, Small Grants)

1. MundoVerde: Marketing of organic coffee by an association of small-scale coffee producers near Quetzaltenango (Guatemala)
2. Inko Xanakón: Coffee processing and marketing by 58 small-scale producers to meet the standards of the international market (Guatemala)
3. AHPROCAFE: Incorporation of more farmers into organic coffee production and marketing (Honduras)
4. Maryknoll Sisters with CEASPA: Growing and processing of medicinal plants in the forests of Darien (Panama)
5. ANAI: Community groups for ecotourism management in Gandoca/Manzanillo (Costa Rica)
6. FUNDAECO: Development of ecotourism routes at Cerro San Gil, with special reference to trails for birders (Guatemala)
7. AMAR: Pilot project to bring ecotourism to the coastal zone of Barra de Santiago (El Salvador)
8. AMICA: Training a women's group to manage ecotourism (Nicaragua)
9. Foundation to Promote Indigenous Knowledge: Inventory of ecotourism enterprises and opportunities by the Kuna populations on the San Blas Islands (Panama)
10. Alianza Verde: Establishment of a code of standards for 15 tourism-based enterprises that operate in the Maya Biosphere (Guatemala)

RESULT 5: Advance knowledge and skills on topics important for biodiversity conservation in Central America.

Result 5.1

Implement at least twenty significant training events that contribute to the effectiveness of Results 1-4.

Goal for year 4: Implementation of 12 events (in addition to events under Result 1.5).

Accomplishments:

In Year 4, we implemented (organized, financed, and/or facilitated) 19 training events alone or with co-sponsors, as follows:

Management of Protected Areas: (1) monitoring of protected areas for personnel of MARENA, Nicaragua; (2) regional workshop (held in Panama) on co-management of protected areas for government officials, NGOs, and others; and (3) strategic planning for government personnel of the six regions of CONAP, Guatemala.

Environmentally-Friendly Production and Marketing: (1) two training events on the design and operation of ecotourism projects at the community level in coastal Nicaragua, in coordination with PROARCA/Costas; and (2) workshop for Mundo Verde on its marketing strategy for coffee, in coordination with the Small Grants component of PROARCA/CAPAS.

Cross-Country Harmonization: (1) support to the region's CONADIBIOs for seven national and one regional meeting to prepare for the COP5 on biodiversity; and (2) nine meetings (seven national and two regional) to harmonize the administration of CITES in Central America;

Institutional Strengthening: (1) project indicators, monitoring, and evaluation for the Latin American Workshop on Environmental Funds; (2) facilitation of "lessons learned" at the regional meeting of recipients of PROARCA/CAPAS grants; and (3) facilitation of participatory sessions on forest policy in Panama.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	We did not present "off-the-shelf" training. Rather, we responded to real demands, which we studied carefully beforehand in each case. The training manager prepared terms of reference and "responsibility agreements" with partners, recipients, and consultants in order to minimize misunderstandings.

c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	For most training interventions, PROARCA/CAPAS assumed a lead or co-support role in design, organization, invitation, logistics, evaluation, and follow-up. This is always challenging across countries.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	We surpassed our benchmark for this result by a wide margin, and we contributed substantially to the agendas of partners such as SICA/Environment, PROARCA/Costas, and USAID bilateral missions.

Result 5.2

Design and implement at least ten small contracts to help advance the work of Central American scientists, professors, teachers, post-graduate students, civic and social leaders, etc., who are making (or have the potential to make) exceptional contributions to the themes and strategies of PROARCA/CAPAS.

Goal for year 4: Successful completion of 10 “genius” projects.

Accomplishments:

All ten projects were brought to successful completion by mid-2000, and are listed at the conclusion of each of Results 1, 2, and 3.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	We disbursed funds against progress reports and financial reports, and conferred frequently with each individual to assess problems and progress.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	N/A
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	To the best of our knowledge, PROARCA/CAPAS is the only regional environmental project to competitively channel funds to creative Central Americans (“geniuses”) for them to pursue innovative projects. Our experience has provided valuable lessons regarding selection methods, project oversight, and reporting relationships.

RESULT 6: Contribute to strengthened initiatives by the Executive Secretariat of SICA/CCAD.

Result 6

Provide resources to complement CCAD's workplans for 1998, 1999, and 2000 through specialists, experts, and/or co-funded activities.

Goal for year 4: Provide specialized assistance to produce results relevant to one or more current priorities of CCAD.

Accomplishments:

In Year 4, we provided support to the Executive Secretariat of SICA/CCAD in three actions: (1) PROARCA/CAPAS was among the most proactive of the regional environmental projects in the original drafting and subsequent regional review of the Regional Environmental Action Plan for Central America (PARCA); (2) we coordinated carefully with the Executive Secretariat in co-financing and co-facilitating numerous regional and national events related to CITES and the Biodiversity Convention; and (3) we accepted a lead role in the theme of co-management of protected areas, and responded positively to SICA/CCAD to organize regional and national activities on the subject.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	99 (counting only PARCA, since the other activities appear within Results 1.5 and 5.1).
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	PROARCA/CAPAS communicated frequently with SICA/CCAD in terms of logistics, payments to cover expenditures, invitations to participants, etc.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	All technical assistance originated from within PROARCA/CAPAS.
d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative	Other than USAID/G-CAP's direct funding for selected personnel and support costs in San Salvador, CAPAS has been the only component of PROARCA with a mandate to provide a share of project resources in support of SICA/CCAD's workplans.

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

Provide small grants to Central American NGOs and other non-profit institutions to strengthen community and professional participation in important activities for the conservation and use of natural resources (policy analysis, management of protected areas, environmentally-friendly land uses, etc.) that support the objectives of PROARCA/CAPAS.

Goal for year 4: Successful completion of 25 grant-funded projects.

Accomplishments:

By September 30, PROARCA/CAPAS expects to have closed the 25 small grants agreements that we signed in early 1999. The projects are distributed across seven themes and seven countries, and are listed at the conclusion of each of Results 1, 2, 3, and 4. By September 30, we expect that total (final) expenditure by the grantees will be approximately \$950 thousand (i.e., 95% of the targeted \$1 million).

Of the 25 projects, 24 successfully reached a satisfactory conclusion. We terminated one grant before the end of its contract period to due to our perception of impending financial mismanagement.

a. Percentage of the benchmark reached	98
b. Management and leadership in reaching the benchmark	PROARCA/CAPAS established a regional identity in its grants in several ways: by selecting from a regional pool of applicants, by convening a regional selection committee, by convening regional meetings of the recipients to explain grants management and to review grants results, and by producing and exchanging information among the 25 recipient organizations. According to the grantees, we are the only regional environmental project in Central America to do this.
c. Quality and timing of the TA, and relevance to the project	The grants team in PROARCA/CAPAS went out of its way to provide individualized attention to the needs of each of the 25 recipients. This consisted of diligent and timely communications from Guatemala, financial oversight and auditing, technical visits by members of the PROARCA/CAPAS professional team to several of the projects, careful report review by the grants team, and participation by the grants team in several NGO events.

<p>d. Notable performance through exceptional contractor initiative</p>	<p>One-third of our grants recipients were small and less-experienced NGOs ("Level 2"), giving us particular challenges for grants oversight in matters of communication, financial management, and obtention of reports. Secondly, we funded seven grants in support of marine-coastal conservation in order to reach across PROARCA to issues of importance in PROARCA/Costas. Thirdly, we created opportunities to present the grants projects to the USAID/bilateral missions (all five of them), and to two ministers of environment (Honduras and El Salvador).</p>
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